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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/765,544	01/27/2004	George Chester Cox		2318
7590 Mr. George Chester Cox P.O. Box 86 Bedford Hills, NY 10507				
EXAMINER MEINCKE DIAZ, SUSANNA M				
ART UNIT 3692		PAPER NUMBER		
MAIL DATE 04/08/2008		DELIVERY MODE PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/765,544

Applicant(s)

COX, GEORGE CHESTER

Examiner

Susanna M. Diaz

Art Unit

3692

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/ICE)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/6/05
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-12 are presented for examination.

Specification

2. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

3. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it is too long and comprises multiple paragraphs. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Objections

4. The numbering of claims is not in accordance with 37 CFR 1.126 which requires the original numbering of the claims to be preserved throughout the prosecution. When claims are canceled, the remaining claims must not be renumbered. When new claims are presented, they must be numbered consecutively beginning with the number next following the highest numbered claims previously presented (whether entered or not).

Misnumbered claims 7-13 have been renumbered as claims 6-12.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

5. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

6. Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

It is not clear to which statutory class each claim is directed. Claim 1 appears to be directed toward a merchant *per se*, which is improper under § 101 because living subject matter is not patentable subject matter (see MPEP § 2105). Claims 3 and 4 refer to the merchant's system according to claim 1; however, there is no antecedent basis for "the merchant's system" so it is not clear if claims 3 and 4 are also directed toward a merchant *per se* or a system. Similarly, it is not clear which statutory class claims 2 and 5-12 are directed to since they recite fragments of limitations without any clear indication of which statutory class they entail; therefore, claims 1-12 are deemed to be non-statutory. For further guidance, please refer to MPEP § 2106.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

7. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

8. Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1-12 are rejected as failing to define the invention in the manner required by 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. The claim(s) are narrative in form and replete with indefinite and functional or operational language. The structure which goes to make up the device must be clearly and positively specified. The structure must be organized and correlated in such a manner as to present a complete operative device. The claims must be in one sentence form only. Note the format of the claims in the patents cited by Applicant in the IDS dated July 6, 2005.

For example, as per claim 1, the preamble frames the claim as being directed toward a merchant *per se*. First, patent protection cannot be granted on living subject matter (as seen in MPEP 2105 and discussed in the § 101 rejection). It is not understood what the elements of the claims are. If Applicant rewrites claim 1 as a system claim, then the claim requires structural elements in the body of the claim. Additionally, claim 1 relies on 18 USC section 1029, which is subject to amendments or even abolishment, thereby further rendering the scope of the claim vague and indefinite since the scope of the claim may change over time if 18 USC section 1029 were to change or be abolished altogether. Furthermore, the recitations of companies, banks, financial institutions, documents, benefits, and enterprises are abstract in nature. They attribute no clearly defined structure or functionality to the claim.

Claim 2 is a sentence fragment. It is not understood if claim 2 is dependent on another claim. The intended scope of claim 2 as a whole is ambiguous since the metes and bounds of the claim are not fully set forth.

Claim 3 recites "the merchant's system according to claim 1"; however, there is no antecedent basis for "the merchant's system" in claim 1 as claim 1 recites no merchant system. Without being placed into the context of a statutory category of subject matter, such as a process or product (please see MPEP § 2106 for further guidance), the recited items cannot be assessed in terms of which items patentably distinguish the claim over the prior art.

Claim 4 recites "the merchant's system according to claim 1"; however, there is no antecedent basis for "the merchant's system" in claim 1 as claim 1 recites no merchant system. Without being placed into the context of a statutory category of subject matter, such as a process or product (please see MPEP § 2106 for further guidance), the recited items cannot be assessed in terms of which items patentably distinguish the claim over the prior art.

Claim 5 is a sentence fragment. It is not understood if claim 5 is dependent on another claim. The intended scope of claim 5 as a whole is ambiguous since the metes and bounds of the claim are not fully set forth. Similar issues arise with claims 6-12.

Further, claims 9 and 10 refer to "the pre-authentication method and process." There is no clarification as to which previously recited pre-authentication method and process are being referenced, especially since no other process claims are presented.

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Again, claims 9 and 10 are incomplete in terms of defining the metes and bounds of the claimed invention.

The aforementioned issues are only examples of why the claims cannot be confidently assessed in terms of the intended metes and bounds of each respective claim. Due to the extensively narrative nature of the claims, the Examiner is left with no tools to reasonably interpret the claimed invention.

Because claims 1-12 are so indefinite, no art rejection is warranted as substantial guesswork would be involved in determining the scope and content of these claims.

See In re Steele, 305 F.2d 859, 134 USPQ 292 (CCPA 1962); Ex parte Brummer, 12 USPQ 2d, 1653, 1655 (BdPatApp&Int 1989); and also In re Wilson, 424 F.2d 1382, 165 USPQ 494 (CCPA 1970).

Appropriate correction is required.

Conclusion

9. An examination of this application reveals that applicant is unfamiliar with patent prosecution procedure. While an inventor may prosecute the application, lack of skill in this field usually acts as a liability in affording the maximum protection for the invention disclosed. Applicant is advised to secure the services of a registered patent attorney or agent to prosecute the application, since the value of a patent is largely dependent upon skilled preparation and prosecution. The Office cannot aid in selecting an attorney or agent.

A listing of registered patent attorneys and agents is available on the USPTO Internet web site <http://www.uspto.gov> in the Site Index under "Attorney and Agent Roster." Applicants may also obtain a list of registered patent attorneys and agents located in their area by writing to the Mail Stop OED, Director of the U. S. Patent and Trademark Office, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susanna M. Diaz whose telephone number is (571) 272-6733. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8 am - 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kambiz Abdi can be reached on (571) 272-6702. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Susanna M. Diaz/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3692
March 31, 2008